

THE PACIFIC Commercial Advertiser

WALTER G. SMITH - - EDITOR.

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Aguinaldo Wilcox hated the Americans so badly that he even refused to spell their language correctly.

The late kona storm did not extend very far towards the coast, the Oceanic steamship Sierra, which left about that time, having had an exceptionally smooth passage.

Business is showing marked improvement in this city and throughout the group and the presence here of capitalists looking for investment is indicative of a wider application than has been made at any previous time of the means to insure prosperity.

The Advertiser wishes the Anti-Saloon League success in all its measures, and it hopes that the movement began by Dr. Chapman will not permit itself, for its own sake, to be switched off in a direction where men of family, who want professional vice kept from the sight of the home, cannot conscientiously follow.

Legislators who think they can edit the journal which is being written for the use of the President of the United States deceive themselves. And those who count on excluding the President's representative from a place where he can hear and observe the proceedings, as he is required to do under the Organic Act, may be preparing for a lively little scrimmage with Judge Estee's court.

Hawaii has taken no official steps to be represented at the Pan-American exhibition at Buffalo. The fact is probably due to the public belief that the money spent on the Omaha exhibit was thrown away and that little practical good came of the display at Paris. However, it seems a pity that in an exposition of All the Americas, Hawaii should have no place except such as private speculation may give it on the Midway.

The chance is very good indeed that the Naval committee will come to Hawaii next summer on a warship to inspect Pearl Harbor and look up a site for a naval station. Our well-informed Washington correspondent gives the full particulars in another column. The visit of these leading members of Congress will be useful in many other than naval ways, as a knowledge of the general situation here on the part of Senators and Members would go far to secure statesmanlike courses towards this Territory. We are bound to say that such courses would be doubly welcome for their novelty.

A tempest in a teapot has been raised about the official presence, at the sessions of the Legislature, of Territorial Secretary Cooper. Humphreys is particularly violent about it, being in ignorance, presumably, of Sec. 69 of the Organic Act, which says that the Territorial Secretary "shall record and preserve all the laws and proceedings of the Legislature." How the Secretary could perform this duty to the satisfaction of Congress and the President without hearing the proceedings in person or by proxy, no one has yet informed him. The native legislators want Mr. Cooper to consult their journal but any one who has observed the writer of that document groping in bewilderment from one hazy sentence to another will easily pardon Mr. Cooper for preferring the evidence of his own eyes and ears.

A. F. Gunn, the book trust lobbyist, is writing letters to various influential people here, objecting in sharp terms to the Advertiser's leading article on the iniquitous book trust, but taking care to make the precise text of his letters confidential so that this paper may not have a chance to reply. We should like very much indeed to hear any reason why it is better to tie the schools up to a five years' contract with one concern, than it is to give the schools liberty to buy books, as they want them, from any and all concerns. If Mr. Gunn has anything to offer under this head the facilities of these columns are his. Meanwhile the Advertiser is condensing material from a work by an Eastern college president on the trust which Mr. Gunn represents, that will probably bring on another eruption of his "confidential" letters.

Today's anniversary recalls the fact that all the early observances of Washington's day were on February 11, the old style of the calendar not having been everywhere and for every purpose abandoned. Indeed the stone placed as late as in 1815 on the site of his birthplace in Westmoreland county, Va., had the following inscription: "Here, the 11th day of February, 1732, George Washington was born." The first recorded mention of the celebration of his birthday is said to be the one in the Virginia Gazette or the American Advertiser of Richmond: "Tuesday last being the birthday of His Excellency General Washington, our illustrious Commander-in-Chief, the same was commemorated here with the utmost demonstrations of joy." The day thus celebrated was February 11, 1732. Twelve months later the same day was commemorated at Talbot Court House in Maryland; in 1784, in New York, and it was not till 1793 that the 22nd of February was substituted.

The worth of Wilcox as a Delegate in Congress is shown by his defeat of a bill to redeem the existing coinage of Hawaii with American money, giving value for value. Wilcox could have had nothing against the measure, but when called upon for information on a subject of which he knew little, he blundered into some mis-statements about the parity of gold and silver here which deceived the Democrats and led them to deny the redemption bill the support of the necessary two-thirds majority. Correct data were supplied as soon as might be by Mr. Haywood, the intelligent unofficial representative of Hawaii at Washington, and if the bill comes up again at this session, as is barely possible, it may pass. One effect of Wilcox's blunder has been to deprive him of any shred of influence he may have had left after the exposure of his mis-spelled and boastful letters offering his tin sword to Aguinaldo and assuring him that the re-enforcement would wipe out the invading army of the United States.

To appoint a committee to notify the Governor of its readiness to hear his message and then adjourn without waiting for it, is a proceeding that no American Legislature, so far as we know, ever attempted. It is something new in Parliamentary decorum which will be regarded at Washington with curious interest.

OF CURRENT INTEREST.

Libel Suits Followed Wales' Visit.

Reminiscences of the Prince of Wales' visit to Boston are scarcely complete without some reference to the libel suits which grew out of the descriptions of the grand ball given in his honor at the Boston Theater, recalls the Herald. The plaintiff in these suits was George, the Count Joannes, who was a somewhat noted figure in those days, and the particular report of the ball to which he took exception was written by Francis H. Underwood, who, in his description of the distinguished guests of the occasion, mentioned "a soi-disant Count, wearing the insignia conferred upon him by the Duke of Pumpernickel." It was a famous piece of newspaper work and it attracted wide attention. The soi-disant Count sued his alleged detractors for libel, and the law reports of the judicial proceedings in the case, which were carried up to the highest court, and which ultimately included not only the newspaper reporter, but all the stockholders on the offending newspaper, in its list of defendants. The ultimate outcome of these proceedings was the acquittal of George, the Count Joannes, as a common nuisance. It was a great victory for the newspapers, and wide was the fame thereof.

Had to Deny That He Was Dead

John A. Kasson, commissioner to negotiate various reciprocity treaties, is one of the Board of Governors of the Metropolitan Club, the most fashionable club in Washington, and a correspondent at the capital. On the day the Queen died Mr. Kasson called up the club by telephone and directed that the club flag be put at half mast. The person who answered the telephone did not understand who Mr. Kasson said was dead, and asked "who is it?" John A. Kasson, replied Mr. Kasson, thinking the inquiry was made as to his identity. Whereupon the person on the telephone rushed frantically back into the smoking-room and announced that John A. Kasson, one of the governors of the club, was dead. The flag was accordingly half-masted and a notice of Mr. Kasson's death posted on the bulletin board. Three hours later Mr. Kasson walked into the club and read the notice of his death. Then he went into the smoking-room and declared it wasn't so.

The Old Chaps Should Be Careful.

In a late one of the series of articles contributed by eminent authorities to the New York Sun on scientific progress in the past century, Professor Osier of the Johns Hopkins University considers the progress of medicine, and remarks that the prophylactic benefit of systematic exercise, taken in moderation by persons of middle age, has been very great. Golf and the bicycle have materially lowered the average incomes of the doctors of this country as derived from persons under 40. But the notable statement of Professor Osier in this connection is that, while the income of the medical fraternity has been reduced by the systematic exercise taken by the young and middle aged, it has been correspondingly increased by the additional medical attention required by the senile contingent who are said to have been injured by taking up sports which may be vigorously pursued with safety only by those with young arteries.

Stringent Anti-Cigarette Measure.

The most radical anti-cigarette measure yet proposed is now under consideration in the Minnesota Legislature, having been introduced by Senator Halvorsen, one of whose constituents recently died from smoking too many cigarettes. The proposed bill is modeled on the Tennessee law, which the United States Supreme Court has held to be constitutional, and makes it a misdemeanor to use tobacco in this form, bars merchants from bringing cigarettes into the State, makes giving away cigarettes an equally grave offense, and even prohibits the sale of the papers used in rolling cigarettes.

A Snub for Snobs.

It is understood that when the Czar conferred the title of Countess on Mlle. Marguerite Cassini, grandniece and adopted daughter of the Russian Minister to this country, his Majesty administered a snub to certain leaders of Washington society. These had denied the charming young Russian what her grandniece regarded as her proper status, holding that as she was neither wife nor daughter to the diplomatic she was not entitled to more than secondary consideration. Now her social rank is of the highest. The Countess is not yet quite 15 years old.

Pomeroy Still Incurable.

There are now sixteen prisoners in solitary confinement in the Massachusetts State Prison, at Charlestown, the most dangerous of the lot being Jesse Pomeroy, "the boy murderer." He is constantly laying plans to escape, and constantly keeps the guards ever on the alert to thwart them. He once pulled down the ventilator over his cell door and made a saw of a portion of the material. Then the place was walled up and fresh air introduced into his cell by other ways. He has now been imprisoned twenty-seven years on a life sentence.

Knew the Queen as a Bride.

Thomas Meehan of Philadelphia had a personal acquaintance with Queen Victoria. When he was a young man he learned his business, that of landscape gardener and nurseryman, on the Queen's estates in the Isle of Wight. He remembers vividly the honeymoon of the Queen and the Prince Consort, and he relates how, from a respectful distance, he used to watch the royal couple walking in the twilight along the sea wall. He says they were the most devoted bride and groom he ever saw. They always acted like lovers.

A Grass Widow's Club.

A club of divorced women has been formed in the Austrian capital, the object being to provide the comforts of the home for all women who have been compelled to divorce their husbands. Legal aid will also be furnished to women seeking freedom from irksome bonds and every effort will be made to secure reform in present marriage laws.

Consumptives To Be Registered.

The idea seems to be gaining ground that consumptives should be known as such. The Philadelphia Board of Health at a recent meeting discussed compulsory registration of consumptives, and inclined to its favor in the belief that it will tend to check the disease.

HAS RARE BOOK.

Roman Missal of the Twelfth Century.

CONTAINS MANY ODD CHARACTERS

Preston A. Perry Has Traveled all Over the World in Search of Rare Volumes.

PRESTON A. PERRY, a guest at the Hawaiian Hotel who came to Honolulu on the Ventura, might be called by some a bookworm, although there is nothing in his appearance to warrant one in believing that he has delved into the outermost corners of the earth in the search for rare books. Mr. Preston is one of the genial-looking, easy-going men whom one meets on steamers, on railroad trains and in the hotel lobbies the world over, and has gained the sobriquet of a globe-trotter. That he is a lover of books, not only for what is in them, but for the era in which they were published, does not occur to a casual observer.

For years Mr. Preston has roamed over the globe seeking in queer, quaint, out-of-the-way corners off the line of general travel, to ferret out some odd volume long lost to libraries and forgotten upon the shelves of those who do not know their true value. In his role as a collector of rarities Mr. Preston has picked up some of the most valuable volumes known in the book world. Many of them are the only ones known, and some of them were printed so far back in the Middle Ages that the history of many countries was not even known. Such a book as this Mr. Preston has with him. It is a volume known as the Roman Missal, or mass book, and even Mr. Preston is unable to gauge its proper value. That a duplicate was ever made, is not known, but Mr. Preston says that books printed by hand after the twelfth century were rarely duplicated.

"Long before the days of printing books by mechanical processes were in vogue," said Mr. Preston yesterday, "and almost two centuries before Caxton immortalized his name by giving to the world an invention whereby books and papers could be printed by the means of letters of the alphabet graven upon blocks of wood, the monks of the Holy Catholic church produced them by hand with the stylus dipped in the most perfect inks, spending, in some instances, many years upon a single volume of prayers."

The Roman Missal is not a large volume. It is perhaps six inches long, four inches wide and about two inches thick. The cover is of heavy black leather, cumbersome according to modern tastes, and stamped with gold. The leaves are made of parchment, turned to a rich yellow hue by more than six centuries of time.

"From my investigations this book was made by the monks in Rome in the thirteenth century, entirely by hand," said Mr. Preston, "and as you see is most beautifully illuminated. In fact, I believe it is conceded that this volume has the most beautiful and most perfect illuminations of any book yet brought to light. It was made presumably sometime in 1300. That time is fixed on account of some comment in the back of the book in French, many of the terms of which are known to have been used only at that time. Some of the expressions referring to Mother Mary became obsolete after that. This comment was written by one of the owners of the book. It also belonged, presumably, to an Italian named Rippert, whose name is seen in several places. The book is marked by Robert Chambers, the great book collector of Edinburgh, is also pasted on the inside cover. These missals were not made prior to the twelfth century, and none were made later than the fifteenth century."

Each page of the work is done in handsome style, the old Roman text letters being mostly in black, with now and then small words in red or blue. At the end of each sentence, instead of a small period being used, an illumination rectangular in form, often nearly the length of the line, has been inserted. This is done in colors, blue and gold predominating.

The chief glory of the book, however, is in the seven main illuminated letters. The gold work is heavy and has lost none of its luster by time. It is not leaf gold, but pure gold pounded to the thinness of a wafer. Modern artists and illuminators who have seen the work are appalled at the amount of time which must have been spent by the monks on them. "The Calendar of the Saints is a magnificent piece of work. Every line begins with an illuminated letter in gold, blue and red, while scroll and flower designs cover the margins. When it is shown that there are 183 pages of parchment, each with its painstaking array of letters, mounted in colors, the richness of the appearance of the pages can be clearly understood. Mr. Preston has traced out five different handwritings in the book, and the illuminations have been made by a much larger number. The book to Mr. Preston and all book connoisseurs who have seen it, is not only valuable for its age, but as a work of art many artists have pronounced it a wonderful example of the art of the Middle Ages. In the back of the volume a Book of Prayers, probably more than 250 years old, has been bound in with the illuminated work by one of its owners. This printed book alone is valued at from \$500 to \$1,000 and many offers for it have been made.

THE "HOSS DOCTOR'S" MISTAKE.

In a certain down East village live a horse doctor and a veterinary surgeon. The horse doctor is a densely ignorant but loquacious old rustic. The "vet" is a young New Yorker who spent a few years at Yale before hanging out his shingle. He is successful, and the old quack don't "see it." "Johnny's a natchelly smart boy," he told the blacksmith shop loafers the other day, "an' he might ha' learnt hoss doctorin' if only he'd a-stayed down there to Yale long enough. He come home too soon. I know this fer a fact, an' I'll tell ye how I come by it. I had it from old man Yale hisself. Him and I was down to Bridgeport together one day, an' we went into a saloon, bought drinks an' seegars, an' talked about hoss doctorin'." An' Yale told me he wanted John to stay longer, an' John wouldn't do it."

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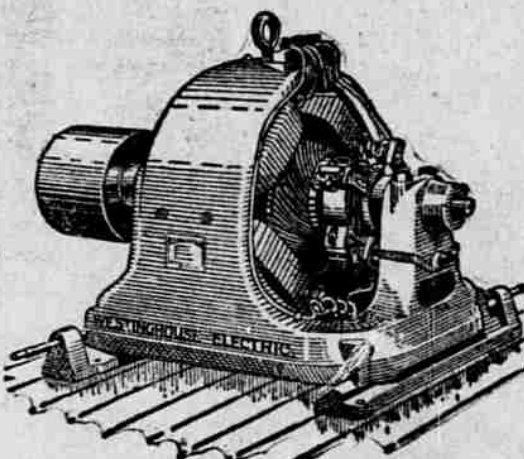
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